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Downside MS 61166 and the Processional Liturgy of Poissy

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Introduction

Downside 61166 is a very small manuscript processional - a highly portable book of chants and music for liturgical processions. The present article contains the first full description of Downside 61166, and demonstrates for the first time that it was written for the Dominican nuns of the priory of Saint Louis, Poissy. Well over thirty other late-medieval processionals from Poissy are known to survive, and this unassuming little Downside manuscript is therefore part of an important corpus of material, offering rich evidence for the evolution of liturgical text and practice within a female monastic context. This article begins with an overview of the very limited existing comment on Downside 61166, followed by an examination of the liturgical contents of the text. My analysis highlights aspects of the manuscript which indicate it was a Dominican text written for nuns, before discussing in some detail the peculiarities linking it to Poissy specifically. The final part of the article traces the evolution of this manuscript over the course of several centuries, locating this process of development within the broader liturgical and textual context of the priory at Poissy, and reflecting upon the ways in which the nuns of this community used, cared for, and updated their books.

Downside Abbey Library's catalogue of accessions records that MS 61166 was one of two medieval manuscripts donated in the winter of 1990-1991 by Dom. Aelred Watkin, a monk of the Abbey and titular abbot of Glastonbury.¹ The catalogue describes the book as MS. Processional for Dominican Nuns of Donquesville, 15th Cent, 224 [folios], but provides no further details. The most detailed account of the Abbey's manuscript holdings is the relevant section of Neil Ker's *Medieval Manuscripts in British Libraries*, but since this work was completed prior to the donation of Downside 61166, the processional was not described as part of this important census. Nevertheless, the library's own copy of *Medieval Manuscripts* does contain a handwritten note, presumably copied from the accessions list, appended to the section dealing with Downside, and reading '61166, Processional for the Dominican Nuns of Donquesville'.²

Further unpublished comment on this manuscript exists in the form of a tiny slip of paper kept with the book and containing on both sides, in an unidentified twentieth-century hand, brief notes on the processional, including an attribution to the 'Dominican nuns of Dracqueville'.³ In addition, some modern notation in English has been added to the first blank folios of the manuscript itself. The recto of fol. ii contains a pencilled list of quotations of some of the instances where the processional uses feminine word forms and titles that indicate it was intended for use by nuns. An older note in English in pen on fol. [ii]v provides cursory details of the contents of the manuscript.⁴

Published material on this text is as scarce as these miscellaneous notes. A fifth companion volume to Ker's *Medieval Manuscripts*, containing indices, errata, and addenda was published in 2002. The editors, Ian Cunningham and Andrew Watson, included a list of additional Downside manuscripts, and provided the following notice concerning MS 61166: '*Processionale*, etc. s. xv/xvi. French Flanders. For Dominican nuns'.⁵ The entry, given here in full, is the sole source cited in a catalogue of surviving medieval processional, collated by Michel Huglo. Following Cunningham and Watson, Huglo's entry reads: 'GB 16/2; GB-DOa, Downside Abbey (Stratton on the Fosse), 61166: Ms. du XV/XVIe s. à l'usage d'un couvent de soeurs dominicaines des Flanders françaises.'⁶ Beyond these two brief notices, I have been unable to find any published reference to the processional.

These miscellaneous, cursory, and inconsistent assessments are in agreement that Downside 61166 is a fifteenth or perhaps sixteenth century work containing the processional liturgy used by Dominican nuns. Beyond this, nothing is known of it with confidence – there is some confusion about the place where, or for which, the manuscript was written. The records of the library describe the text as pertaining to the nuns of 'Donquesville', whilst the anonymous note associates the text instead with the nuns of 'Dracqueville'. However, I have not found any evidence of Dominican houses in places of either name, and it may well be for this reason that the published notices are far less precise, attributing the text instead to 'French Flanders,' presumably because of the style of the illumination on fol 1r. The word 'Dracqueville' does appear throughout this manuscript, but as I argue in this article it refers in fact to a nun who owned the book, and not the house for which it was written. The confusion encapsulates the status of Downside 61166 as a largely unknown, and almost entirely unstudied medieval manuscript.

This article offers for the first time a detailed and sustained scholarly analysis of Downside 61166, including, as an appendix, a full description of the manuscript. The article sets out to establish that this is a processional written according to the use of the Dominican nuns of Poissy, to analyse its liturgical contents, and to assess what this text and others like it reveal about devotional and textual cultures in a female monastic setting.

The Processional Liturgy of Downside 61166

Downside 61166 is a processional, written by at least five different contributors. Most of the text dates from the early and mid fifteenth century, with later repairs and additions. A processional was a type of liturgical book originating in the eleventh century and containing in a small and compact volume the chants, music, readings, and other information needed for the celebration of liturgical processions on major feast days and certain other occasions.⁷ Although the Sunday mass itself featured simple processing, a full festal procession was by definition a special liturgical event, and constituted 'a notable departure in the regular worship routine'.⁸ In his typology of chant books, Michel

Huglo categorised manuscript processional as ‘occasional’ liturgical texts; processional can be distinguished quite sharply from books for the Office and the Mass, which were needed on a daily basis.⁹ By contrast, most processional would be intended for use on only a handful of special occasions, when formal processions were celebrated to underscore the importance of the most prominent feast days within a given liturgical tradition or context. On these days, a large and formal procession, preceded by a cross bearer and candle bearers, worked its way through church and cloister, following a route specified according to local customs, and pausing at several points where the participants sang antiphons, versicles, and responsories proper to the occasion.

The days on which processions were to be observed were not fixed universally, and varied according to factors including geographic region, religious order, and local custom of the individual church or house involved. As a result, the contents and format of any given processional can often be used to determine the context for which it was written. Existing and miscellaneous remarks on Downside 61166 have already highlighted two fundamental characteristics of this particular text: it was written for nuns, and it is Dominican. The attribution to nuns can be substantiated by the feminine pronouns and titles used throughout the manuscript. See for instance fol. 53r: ‘a duabus sororibus cantatur versiculus’; fol. 89v: ‘post missam quando defuncta debet deferri’; fol. 92r: ‘pro sorore nostre’ and ‘super peccatrice’; fol. 92v: ‘famula tua’; fol. 94r: ‘ancilla tua’; fol. 165r ‘due sorores dicant...’; and fol. 191r ‘In receptione noviciarum’. The appearance of these terms, rather than their masculine equivalents, clearly indicates that the text was intended for the exclusive use of nuns.¹⁰ Like other liturgical books for nuns, it therefore stands as an important witness to women’s routine interaction with the written word in the later middle ages.¹¹

The Dominican nature of this processional is not quite so self-evident, but is also readily established on the basis of the configuration of the liturgical contents. For instance, the presence of a full procession to mark the feast of Saint Dominic (fols 73v - 76v) is a clear indication that the nuns for whom this text was written must have been Dominican. Saint Dominic was a popular figure in the later middle ages, and although his feast day was observed universally in Europe, only within the Dominican Order itself was it celebrated with a solemn festal procession such as that provided for in Downside 61166. The presence of these chants, along with certain other features, therefore indicates with certainty that this manuscript was written as a Dominican processional. These initial observations, already stated in existing notices, represent the starting point for a more detailed analysis that seeks to locate the contents of Downside 61166 more specifically within the Dominican liturgical tradition.

The processional liturgy of most religious orders was relatively stable during the middle ages, and Michel Huglo has observed that the contents of processional therefore remained ‘substantially identical with the originals’ specified in any given order.¹² In the Dominican context, this means that the base text for all processional was the reformed liturgy produced under Humbert of Romans, Master General of the Order from 1254 to 1263. The Dominican Order had been founded in 1216, and the first generations of mendicant, itinerant brothers kept the liturgy as it was observed locally.¹³ With the order growing and expanding across Europe, this meant that by the middle of the thirteenth

century thousands of friars travelling all across Europe were celebrating various different forms of the liturgy, resulting in what William Bonniwell referred to as a 'great diversity' of liturgical practice. By the 1240s, if not beforehand, this lack of unity was identified as an increasingly serious problem, and a commission of four friars was appointed to establish a uniform liturgy that would bind together the mobile and dispersed community of brothers.¹⁴

In practice, it seems that the liturgy of the four friars was adopted only inconsistently, and when, in 1254, Humbert became Minister General he was promptly mandated to pursue further reform and standardisation. He did so by preparing a small number of centralised prototype copies of a new, revised liturgy. These were produced at the convent of Saint-Jacques in Paris, where one copy was kept until the French Revolution, after which it was removed to Santa Sabina in Rome, where it remains today.¹⁵ A second complete surviving prototype, now kept in the British Library, is a relatively compact, portable volume made for the personal use of the Minister General so that he could correct manuscripts and settle any liturgical disputes whilst travelling.¹⁶ All new liturgical books were to be copied from and checked against a certified exemplar, and examined thoroughly before they were used for singing.¹⁷ Whilst the process of standardisation was undoubtedly still piecemeal, and remained ongoing even in 1270, the eventual result was a largely uniform liturgy based on the prototype.¹⁸

The prototype comprised fourteen separate books, one of which, the *processionarium*, contained the material needed for the six major festal processions initially specified by Humbert's reformed liturgy.¹⁹ These were held to mark Palm Sunday, Easter Sunday, Ascension, the Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and the feast of Saint Dominic. In the first decade of the fourteenth century the Dominican Order upgraded the feast of Corpus Christi to the highest liturgical rank of *totum duplex*, and from this point onwards it too was to be marked with a procession. The necessary chants were inserted into the existing liturgical exemplars, and, against some initial resistance, a procession for this new feast was gradually accepted across the entire order, bringing to seven the total number of feasts present in standard Dominican processional.²⁰ With the exception of these feasts, there was no occasion on which Dominican nuns in general were necessarily required to hold a festal procession.

Downside 61166 contains material for all seven of these mandatory processions.²¹ As a result, this manuscript was clearly sufficient for the celebration of the standard medieval Dominican processional liturgy. Yet the chants for these seven feasts represent only a small fraction of the total material contained within the Downside manuscript. In attempting to establish with greater precision the provenance of this little book, content that cannot have been derived from the central Dominican liturgy is of critical importance. Indeed, given the uniformity and stability of the Dominican processional liturgy, Michel Huglo has remarked that the study of individual manuscripts of this type more or less 'amounts to the study of the peculiarities distinguishing the copy from the exemplar'.²² The question therefore becomes: which, if any parts, of Downside 61166 can be identified as liturgical peculiarities?

The contents of the manuscript can be divided into three categories depending on how they relate to the prototype liturgy. The first category of material is that copied directly from the Dominican exemplar. The seven feasts named above can all be ascribed to this category, as can the chants and prayers used during burial rites and found on fols 89v-115v of the Downside manuscript. Burial involved a solemn procession to the graveside, so there was an inherent logic in including the relevant chants in the prototype Dominican *processionarium*, alongside material for use during festal processions.

The inclusion of burial rites in the prototype processional liturgy also makes sense when viewed from a practical perspective. Indeed, since it was a small, compact, portable volume, that could be carried whilst walking and easily stored in a sleeve or pocket, the genre of the processional became a useful resource for a wide range of liturgical occasions involving dramatic elements. David Hiley has observed that ‘the processional attracted to itself chants that formed part of ceremonies other than mass and the office hours, for example the Maundy Thursday antiphons, chants for the Veneration of the Cross on Good Friday, and for the Easter Vigil’.²³ This was a straightforward arrangement made, in the words of Michel Huglo ‘for the sake of convenience’.²⁴ Conventional inclusion of this kind of material in medieval processionals accounts for various other parts of the Downside manuscript, such as the Benediction of Ashes on Ash Wednesday (fols 32r-42r); the Gospel (fols 1r-24v), Mandatum (fols 55v-64v), and Kyrie (fols 150v-152r) for Maundy Thursday; and the Adoration of the Cross on Good Friday (fols 150v-174v). Processionals made for Dominican nuns also routinely included a variety of additional chants not specified by the prototype. The final sections of the Downside manuscript, featuring material for the ceremonial reception of novices (fols 191r-194v), of prelates of the Church (fols 194v-197r), and of secular princes (fols 197v-199r), as well as material for the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary (fols 200r-204v) and Trinity Sunday (fols 205r-209r), are conventional when measured against the standard of late medieval processionals written for Dominican nuns.

Once material that was either copied from the central Dominican prototype, or else included in accordance with the conventions of the genre, has been excluded, there remains a third classification of items in Downside 61166. It is this unexplained and outstanding material that is of most immediate interest. Three categories of material remain unaccounted for and merit further, detailed discussion. Firstly, there are festal processions for Saint Louis (fols 81v-86r), the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary (fols 186r-191v), and the Nativity of John the Baptist (fols 180r-186r), none of which were specified by the prototype Dominican liturgy. Secondly, the Downside manuscript contains an incomplete set of altar propers for the Purification of the Altars on Maundy Thursday. As discussed in more detail below, the propers were anticipated by the prototype liturgy but not actually specified by it, as each individual church required a different arrangement of chants. Thirdly, there is in Downside 61166 an obscure sequence in honour of Saint Katherine of Alexandria (fols 86r-89v). In each of these three instances, the peculiarities that distinguish the Downside processional from the Dominican prototype and from the broader conventions of the genre indicate, with varying degrees of confidence, that the manuscript must have been written according to the use of the Dominican nuns of the priory of Saint Louis in Poissy. Before examining

these peculiarities and their relationship to Poissy, it will be useful to provide a brief overview of the history of this celebrated house.

The Priory of Saint Louis

The priory at Poissy was founded by King Philip ('le Bel') IV of France (r. 1285-1314), in honour of his grandfather, the sainted King Louis IX (r. 1226-1270).²⁵ The House of Capet had close and longstanding ties to Poissy, which lies on the banks of the Seine, about 15 miles west-by-north-west from the centre of Paris. In relative proximity to the Palais de la Cité and the royal court, it was an obvious site for a major, royal foundation, and it was a particularly attractive location for a community dedicated to the commemoration of the new Saint Louis, who had been baptised at Poissy in the collegiate church of Notre Dame, and who might perhaps also have been born in the town, though the priory's foundation charter and other sources are equivocal about this final point.²⁶

In 1298 Philip succeeded in persuading the Dominican Order to accept spiritual oversight of the one hundred nuns whom he hoped to install at the new foundation.²⁷ All of the nuns were to be of noble birth, and all were to be able to read Latin at a level sufficient for participation in the liturgy.²⁸ Although this condition implies a relatively good standard of education, reinforcing and augmenting the selectivity of the community, it would not in practice have required a particularly high standard of Latin, and nor does it indicate that the nuns in general would *necessarily* have had any great literary pretensions, ambitions or abilities.²⁹ This was a simple and pragmatic requirement. The purpose of the community was liturgical: Philip went to great expense to fund the building of a sumptuous church in which the liturgy could be celebrated, and he also spent huge sums of money on the production of *de luxe* liturgical books to equip the new choir.³⁰ It was essential that the sisters had sufficient knowledge of the Latin of the liturgy to capitalise on these investments.

The first group of nuns moved to the site of the new priory in 1304, and since the great church of Saint Louis, which was not consecrated until 1331, was still under construction, they must have worshipped in a smaller chapel, probably that dedicated to Saint Dominic.³¹ From the very beginning, the sisters at Poissy benefitted from extensive royal as well as papal favour and privileges.³² Support in high places proved vital in sustaining this aristocratic establishment over the following centuries, as it weathered the various storms brought by war, plague, public scandal, and hotly contested reform.³³ From its earliest days it housed not only women of noble families, but even royal princesses; it later hosted the famous writer Christine de Pizan, and in the wake of the Protestant Reformation it was the setting for the Colloquy of Poissy, where prelates of the French Catholic Church and Calvinist theologians made a final, failed, effort to achieve reconciliation. The priory was suppressed during the revolution, and the church of Saint Louis subsequently destroyed.

One of the most enduring legacies of the priory comes in the form of the manuscripts written for and used by the nuns. Seventy-one Poissy manuscripts were catalogued and studied by Joan Naughton in her PhD thesis of 1995, and the corpus, which has subsequently grown further, encompasses sumptuous breviaries and missals written for royalty and illuminated by the leading artists of the day, simple liturgical aids that appear to have been copied in-house, and devotional and literary works composed by the nuns themselves.³⁴ The rich and varied collection of surviving manuscripts offers a wealth of evidence for the ways in which these aristocratic religious women of the late medieval and early modern periods commissioned, wrote, owned, and read their books. Each of the three liturgical peculiarities noted above reveals, on closer inspection, that Downside 61166 is part of this important corpus of Poissy manuscripts.

Festal Processions at Poissy

The first, and most obvious, indication of a Poissy provenance for the Downside manuscript is the inclusion of processional material for three feasts that were not specified in the Dominican exemplars. The manuscript must have been written for use in a place where the feast of Saint Louis (25 August), the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary (8 September), and the Nativity of John the Baptist (24 June) bore special significance. That place can only have been Poissy. Saint Louis, as the patron of the priory, was venerated here with particular diligence, and from the very beginning of the community's existence the sisters held an additional procession, not mandated in the prototype or observed generally by Dominicans, on his feast day on 25 August. Poissy was not quite the only house of Dominican nuns with a church dedicated to Louis, nor the only one to mark his feast with additional solemnities involving a procession. However, the chants found in the Downside manuscript, and the format of the procession in which they were used, were unique to Poissy; no other house of Dominican nuns held a full festal procession on this day.³⁵

The chants used at Poissy for this procession were borrowed from an office which itself may well have been written specifically for the sisters. Following the canonisation of Louis, King Philip commissioned new liturgical material for the celebration of the new saint's feast. Cecilia Gaposchkin suggests that the earliest office for Louis, *Nunc Laudare*, appears to have been written at some speed and conforms to the structure and format required by a Dominican house.³⁶ Although this office might conceivably have been written for the Dominican brothers of Saint-Jacques in Paris, with whom the royal family had close ties, Gaposchkin points out that the accounts of the exchequer indicate that Philip commissioned *Nunc Laudare* at the same time as he was spending vast sums of money on liturgical manuscripts for the new church of Saint Louis.³⁷ Given the prominent role played by Poissy in Philip's memorialisation of his grandfather, this seems unlikely to be a coincidence, and it looks very much as though *Nunc Laudare* was prepared at haste with the sisters of Poissy and the new church, then under construction, in mind.³⁸ In practice, both the Dominican friars at Saint-Jacques and the sisters at Poissy soon stopped using *Nunc Laudare* and instead adopted *Ludovicus Decus*, the office

copied, according to Gaposchkin, ‘at greater leisure’ and initially intended for use at Ste Chapelle and in other secular contexts.³⁹ At Poissy, *Ludovicus Decus* was in use within the first third of the fourteenth century.

The processional liturgy of Poissy priory reflects this devotional history. The office *Nunc Laudare* was only used by the nuns for a short period, perhaps as little as a decade. During this time, however, a selection of chants from the office were extracted and repurposed to provide the material needed for a bespoke festal procession, in honour of Louis, observed only at Poissy. This borrowing of material was standard practice when compiling new sets of processional chants. Even when the office at Poissy was subsequently changed to *Ludovicus Decus*, the processional chants, derived from the older and now obsolete *Nunc Laudare*, were not altered or updated. And so eight chants from this office - the third, sixth, and ninth pairs of Matins responsories, and two antiphons from second vespers - remained in use at Poissy as part of the processional liturgy many centuries after *Nunc Laudare* itself had fallen into disuse.⁴⁰ Whilst the sheer presence of a procession in honour of Saint Louis is a well-established indication of a Poissy provenance, the liturgical contents of that procession therefore afford some new and further insight into the sisters’ interactions with the written and sung word.

The Downside manuscript also contains chants for two other festal processions not specified by the prototype. They are for the feasts of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and the Nativity of Saint John the Baptist. These two feasts appear to have been added to the Poissy liturgy at some point towards the end of the fourteenth century, and they do not occur in the oldest section of the Downside manuscript.⁴¹ The presence of these two feasts represents another widely acknowledged indicator that Downside 61166 must have been written with Poissy in mind. The decision to mark these particular occasions with additional solemnities is curious. The Virgin Mary was of course universally venerated throughout the middle ages. She was a consistent favourite in Dominican devotional contexts, with processions already held to mark her Purification and Assumption. The sisters at Poissy owned a manuscript, perhaps copied for them, of the Deeds and Miracles of the Virgin Mary, but even this concrete evidence of their devotional attachment does not wholly account for the unusual decision to inaugurate, at some point over the course of the fifteenth century, a third festal procession in her honour.⁴² Similarly, John the Baptist attracted much veneration in the late medieval period, especially in the mendicant orders, where he was frequently cited by Dominican authors as an archetype for the preaching work in which they were engaged.⁴³ Cloistered nuns were necessarily limited by their vows from emulating this work in any literal sense, but this does not appear to have deterred them honouring and admiring John. A work containing extracts from a life of John the Baptist is one of few non-liturgical manuscripts known to have been owned by the sisters of Poissy, though, once again, this does not explain why the occasion of his Nativity merited, in the eyes of the community, an extraordinary festal procession.⁴⁴

One possible explanation for these additional processions is that these feasts were important to the sisters not only because of the individual figures venerated, but because they marked dates and anniversaries which had particular significance for the history of the community. In his foundation charter for the new priory, Philip had granted the sisters

grazing rights for the day following the feast of the Nativity of the Virgin, suggesting this may have been an occasion of particular interest or significance for the sisters.⁴⁵ More interesting in this regard is the additional procession marking the Nativity of John the Baptist on 24 June. An anonymous continuator of the universal chronicle of the Dominican friar Géraud de Frachet details the arrival of the very first nuns at the priory in 1304, narrating that:

On the Sunday before the Nativity of Saint John the Baptist, sisters of the order of friars preacher were established at Poissy, of the diocese of Chartres, in the monastery newly constructed by King Philip in honour of the glorious confessor Louis, formerly King of France.⁴⁶

Assuming that this chronology is correct, the feast of John the Baptist would have been the first major liturgical event celebrated by the sisters of the new community, and the most prominent signal of the anniversary of the foundation of the house. It is then quite possible that in future years the Nativity of the Baptist, acting as the *de facto* signal of the priory's anniversary, was afforded the additional honour of a procession as an opportunity to celebrate the very existence of the house. The peculiarities of the processional liturgy found in Downside 61166 therefore not only indicate the provenance of this manuscript, but also raise important questions about the development of Poissy's devotional culture.

The Nativities of the Virgin Mary and of John the Baptist were doubtless significant in and of themselves, but when considered alongside the feast of Saint Louis, a further set of coincidences suggests a different interpretation of the three additional processions observed at Poissy. Each was associated with ideas of birth and baptism. In the cases of the Virgin Mary and John, the feasts themselves were nativities, specifically and explicitly marking birth. In the case of Louis, meanwhile, a well-established tradition, cautiously encouraged by Philip's foundation charter, asserts that the saint himself had been born in Poissy. It is a later and erroneous tradition that the high altar of the church of Saint Louis was built over the very place of his birth, but the persistence of ideas like this indicate the close and enduring association between the community at Poissy and the birth of the saint. Wherever he had, in fact, been born, the priory's foundation charter states unequivocally that the young Louis had subsequently been baptised at Poissy, in the church of the Blessed Virgin Mary.⁴⁷ By coincidence or design, these basic biographical details, linking together Poissy, the church of Saint Louis, and baptism in a Marian church, resonate with the themes accented in the peculiarities of the processional liturgy at Poissy.

Purification of the Altars at Poissy

A second very clear indication of an association with Poissy can be found within another section of the text which cannot in its entirety be derived from the prototype. The text in question is that containing the chants for the rite of the Purification of the Altars, which took place on Maundy Thursday. In Dominican nunneries, the sisters would on this day process to each of the altars in their church, working their way through a standard repertoire of Maundy Thursday responsories. At each altar they would pause, singing an antiphon, verse, and collect proper to the relevant patron, whilst two acolytes washed the altar itself before a deacon anointed it with wine.⁴⁸ The sisters would then proceed, singing the next responsories, to the next altar, where the process was repeated. The celebration of this rite therefore required two separate bodies of chants. One set, the generic responsories, was fixed and universal. The other, the set of altar propers, had to be tailored to meet the liturgical requirements of each individual church, since the number and dedication of altars necessarily varied from place to place. The prototype Dominican liturgy therefore contained the responsories to be used universally, followed by the rubric '*hic ponantur antiphone, versiculi, et oratione de sanctis secundum dispositionem altarium in quolibet conventu*'. Chants proper to the altars in a given church could not be fixed in advance, and so could not be specified in exemplar manuscripts.

Individual Dominican processional manuscripts differed in their approach to this section. Sometimes, the relevant altar propers were interspersed with the generic material from the prototype, so that the chants appear in the order in which they would be sung during the rite.⁴⁹ In many manuscripts, the altar propers are not included at all, and the rubric from the exemplar is simply reproduced verbatim.⁵⁰ In such instances the chants, presumably, were supplied from a separate supplement.⁵¹ On other occasions, the altar propers were listed separately, either at the end of a manuscript, or else, as in Downside 61166, immediately after the responsories. Where the propers are present, they provide further evidence of the liturgical context(s) for which a book was produced; because each church had a different configuration of altars, it is sometimes possible, on these grounds, to determine for which house a given processional was written.

The survival of a large number of liturgical manuscripts from Poissy, many of them processionals, has preserved sufficient data for the reconstruction of the list of altars existing in the church of Saint Louis. By the early fifteenth century there were no fewer than 21 altars, dedicated to: Saint Louis, the Trinity, the Assumption, Saints Augustine and Thomas, Saints Maur and Anthony, Saint Martin, Saint Stephen, Angels, Saint Denis, Saints Peter and Paul, Saint Blaise, Saints Loup and Giles, Saint Dominic and Peter Martyr, Saints Sebastian and Yves, the Holy Cross, the Annunciation, Saint John the Baptist, Saints John and James, Saint Katherine, Saint Mary Magdalen and Martha, and Saint Anne.⁵² The 'less than obvious saintly combinations' to whom some of these altars were dedicated - Loup and Giles, Maur and Anthony, and Yves and Sebastian - prompt Naughton to conclude that although some of these patrons were standard and common dedications, the full list, in this order, is another 'sure indication of a Poissy manuscript'.⁵³

In Downside 61166 the generic responsories for this rite are given in full (fols 115v-132v), though there has been some damage to this section of the text, with several

bifolia, including those containing the final chants, supplied by a later scribe who repaired the text at this point (see the discussion on Scribe D below). After the conclusion of the generic responsories on fol. 132, a number of folios, most probably constituting an entire gathering, are missing from the text. Fol. 133 opens abruptly mid-way through an antiphon used at Poissy as an altar proper for Saint Martin, whose was usually the eighth altar to appear in lists for the priory. From here, the text in the Downside manuscript works through the chants proper to the remaining Poissy altars (fols 133r-150v), running from Stephen to Anne, and providing the chants proper to each along with the first words of the generic responsories, listed in the preceding section, to which they correspond. There can be little doubt that these are the Poissy propers, and that this section of manuscript contains the rite for the purification of the altars as it would have been practiced at the priory of Saint Louis in the late middle ages. However, at some stage, and for reasons unknown, Downside 61166 has lost the texts for the first seven of the altars, and does not contain the revealing rubric often found in other processionals made for the house: *Ordo altarium ablucendorum in cena dominum in ecclesiam beati ludouici de pissiaco*.⁵⁴

Poissy and Saint Katherine

The third peculiarity within Downside 61166 also points towards Poissy, albeit in a less conclusive manner. The manuscript contains a sequence in honour of Saint Katharine of Alexandria (fols 86r-89r), which is unusual for two reasons. Firstly, the sisters at Poissy did not observe a festal procession in honour of Katherine, and the only other place in the manuscript where she is mentioned is in the altar propers (147r-148v). Secondly, sequences were not part of the processional liturgy, and are not usually contained within processionals, in Dominican or other contexts.⁵⁵ The presence of the text appears somewhat anomalous. Whilst a scribal error cannot be ruled out, the appearance of the sequence might well reflect the conscious choice of a medieval owner of the book. We know there was at Poissy an altar dedicated to Katherine, and doubtless there were many nuns who either shared her name or, for other reasons, placed themselves under her protection. Conceivably, her appearance in the Downside manuscript reflects the personal devotional interests on an individual nun who commissioned this part of the text. Setting aside this possible explanation for its presence, there is a second and more consequential peculiarity here. The sequence under consideration is *Gaude prole Graecia*, and is itself uncommon enough that the anonymous twentieth-century reader responsible for a scrap of paper now kept with Downside 61166 commented that they believed it to be 'unique'.⁵⁶ This assessment requires only a marginal clarification – the sequence is unique to Poissy, and is not known in manuscripts other than those produced for the sisters of the priory of Saint Louis. If the reason for its inclusion here remains unclear, the very presence of *Gaude prole graecia*, a sequence proper to the nuns of Poissy, provides a further indication of the provenance of the Downside processional.⁵⁷

Provenance of Poissy Processionals

The above analysis makes it abundantly clear that the Downside manuscript contains the processional liturgy of the Dominican nuns of Poissy. The altar propers, along with the three festal processions discussed above, are widely accepted in existing scholarship as liturgical features which incontrovertibly demonstrate a Poissy provenance. On their basis, in excess of forty surviving processionals have been attributed to the house.⁵⁸ The figure is remarkable, and the survival of such a sizeable corpus of manuscripts of the same type, from the same house, offers substantial opportunities for the study of liturgical culture in a female monastic setting. It also raises some questions concerning provenance. Why and how have such a large number survived? Even on the basis of the 27 identified in her thesis of 1995, Joan Naughton highlighted the disproportionate number of processionals amongst surviving Poissy manuscripts. Especially when compared to extant manuscripts from comparable houses of Dominican nuns such as Sion and Saint Gallen, the concentration of processionals from Poissy appears particularly high.⁵⁹

Several factors are likely to have contributed to the production, continued use, and eventual survival of such a large number of processionals from Poissy. This was a wealthy and sizeable house, with the population of sisters peaking at around 150 in the mid-sixteenth century. With each pair of nuns in a procession requiring access to a copy of the required chants, as many as seventy or eighty of these little books may have been in circulation at any one time. The total number of processionals produced for Poissy over the centuries must therefore have been substantial. The same could, of course, be said of any other relatively wealthy house of Dominican nuns, and the disproportionate survival of Poissy processionals is probably best viewed as a function of the liturgical peculiarities contained within them. The prototype Dominican *processionarium* was first printed in Venice in 1493, and relatively cheap copies were readily available on the Parisian market a few years later.⁶⁰ These printed books, however, lacked the distinctive features of the Poissy processional liturgy, providing an additional stimulus to continue updating and using existing manuscript copies.

It is worth observing that, strictly speaking, the presence of certain liturgical indicators widely accepted as a clear mark of Poissy provenance, shows only that a given manuscript contains the processional liturgy as it was used by the nuns of this priory, and not that it was produced at or for this house specifically. It is conceivable that some manuscripts containing the use of Poissy lacked direct textual connections with the priory. The suggestion may appear implausible, as the peculiarities of the processional liturgy, tailored to the specific context of the church of Saint Louis, would have been of less obvious utility to communities other than that at Poissy. Nevertheless, Terrence Bailey has shown that the processional liturgy of new Sarum was adopted wholesale and apparently without revision, in a wide range of places where peculiar aspects of this liturgy, including the altar propers designed for Salisbury, would at least in principle have been redundant.⁶¹ And so, it cannot necessarily be assumed that any manuscript containing the peculiarities of the Poissy liturgy could only have been associated with the sisters at the priory of Saint Louis. As one of the foremost French houses for Dominican nuns, with a full and well-developed liturgy, a raft of royal and papal privileges, and extensive familial connections, it is conceivable that Poissy and its liturgy represented an

enviable standard to which other houses aspired, or even that this processional liturgy acted as an informal model for French Dominican nuns.

In practice, many liturgical manuscripts containing the Poissy liturgy can be ascribed to the house on grounds other than their liturgical content. The characteristics of certain groups of texts from the priory, including the *mise-en-page*, quality of vellum, manner of decoration, and archaising gothic script, have suggested to scholars including Joan Naughton a distinctive and easily recognisable style for some Poissy manuscripts.⁶² Provenance is more securely and precisely established in those instances where the aristocratic women who owned, commissioned, used, and refurbished these books personalised them, adding not only names and signatures to the fly-leaves but also initials, monograms, and coats of arms, which could be painted as part of the decorative scheme within the text, or else included in the design of a tooled binding. Indications such as these can be checked against other records to establish the identity of the individual Poissy nuns who owned these books. Downside 61166 does not contain heraldic arms or monograms, but one of the nuns who owned it has left her mark upon the text. The word ‘Dracqueville’ is written in the same hand in four different places in the manuscript: on the front and rear pastedowns, underneath the index on the verso of fol. i, and on the otherwise blank fol. 199 (fig. 1). This word, far from being an indication of the house to which this processional pertained, is almost certainly the autograph of Françoise de Dracqueville, a nun who had entered Poissy by 1640, and who was still a living member of the community in 1693. There is more to be said of Françoise below, but for the moment the fact of her ownership should suffice to confirm beyond any reasonable doubt that the Downside manuscript not only contains the processional liturgy as observed by the Dominican nuns of Poissy, but was also owned and used by sisters of that specific house.

The Development of Downside 61166 in Context

Downside 61166 can therefore be examined further within the context of a large corpus of Poissy processionals. By comparing aspects of its contents and development to features of other liturgical manuscripts from Poissy, it will be possible to shed new light not only on aspects of this particular book, but also on the textual and liturgical culture of the priory in which it was used, and the life and thought of the nuns who owned it.

The oldest sections of Downside 61166 were written in northern France in the early fifteenth century by scribe B (fig. 2), who was responsible for 54 folios. In the present arrangement of the manuscript, these folios are grouped into two separate sections fols (26r-31v, and 47r-92r), which together contain the minimal yet nevertheless complete processional liturgy that would have been celebrated at the foundation of the priory in the early fourteenth century. The original core of the manuscript includes all necessary chants for the six feasts specified in the prototype Dominican *processionarium*, along with burial rites, the Maundy Thursday *mandatum*, and chants, borrowed from the office *Nunc Laudare*, for a procession in honour of Saint Louis. As this last item was

proper to the sisters of Poissy, the oldest part of the manuscript must have been intended for use at the priory from its inception. With the exception of the anomalous sequence for Saint Katherine (also proper to Poissy), the text written by scribe B corresponds almost exactly with that found in first-generation Poissy processional books dating from the first half of the fourteenth century.⁶³ These earliest copies of the processional tended to lack material for *Corpus Christi*, which was added to the Dominican liturgy at the beginning of the fourteenth century, and was gradually adopted over the following decades. All Poissy processional books copied before the middle of the fifteenth century also originally lacked material for the Nativity of John the Baptist and the Nativity of the Virgin Mary, each of which were later additions to the processional liturgy.

The absence of these three feasts from the sections written in B's hand is therefore significant. The lack of material for *Corpus Christi* is especially intriguing, since by the time B was writing the feast was well-established and was included in most liturgical manuscripts copied for Poissy from the second half of the fourteenth century onwards. Scribe B may therefore have copied the original core of Downside 61166 from an early processional manuscript which had not yet been updated. In other respects too, B's work evokes the rather sober and pragmatic characteristics of Poissy processional books from the fourteenth century: a neat and simple hand on good quality vellum, with no illumination and a minimal decorative scheme limited to small initials and occasional marginal flourishes.⁶⁴

B was probably a professional scribe, working in Northern France, and perhaps in Paris. In later centuries, the nuns copied some of their own books, but the manuscript culture of the early priory was characterised by lavish donations and commissions, rather than in-house work, and significant sums of money were spent to enable the sisters to develop their stock of liturgical books.⁶⁵ Much of this work may have been commissioned by or through the nearby Dominican house of Saint-Jacques, in Paris, which played a prominent role in the copying and dissemination of liturgical material for the order as a whole.⁶⁶ The Dominican Order stipulated that music should be written with catchnotes at the end of each bar, and since these are not present in B's section of the manuscript it can be surmised that the notator for this section – who may or may not have been the same person as the scribe – was a professional working on commission and not a nun or friar familiar with the Dominican regulations.⁶⁷

In one respect, the work of scribe B stands out significantly from the other medieval manuscripts produced for priory. Downside 61166 is easily the smallest recorded Poissy processional. As a rule, processional manuscripts were compact, often small enough to slip into the sleeve or pocket of a habit when not in use. However, the folios of the manuscript measure just 100 x 62 mm – about the size of a credit card. By size of folio, the next smallest known Poissy processional is one kept in a private Paris collection.⁶⁸ Its folios, measuring 109 x 76 mm, are over 30% larger than those of the Downside processional. Whilst Naughton has remarked upon the characteristically small format of early Poissy books, and particularly of processional books, Downside 61166 clearly and comfortably sets a new standard here for size.⁶⁹ Of course, the folios have been cropped at some point, yet there can be no doubt that this was conceived of from the beginning as a very small book. The written space throughout the manuscript measures

around 78 x 40 mm, a figure matched only by the most compact of liturgical manuscripts from Poissy.⁷⁰ This very small format has been retained by all subsequent contributors adding to the text.

Although the original manuscript written by scribe B represented a viable processional for Dominican Nuns, it was repeatedly adapted, updated, and repaired. All other parts of the manuscript can be viewed as enhancements of this original core. The first and most extensive campaign of additions was undertaken after just a few decades. Over half of the entire manuscript can be attributed to scribe C (32r-46r, 92v-126r, 129r-130v, and 133r-199r) (fig. 3), who was writing in the second half of the fifteenth century. C's additions included further chants and prayers for use on major liturgical occasions already found in the processional, as well as material for new feasts that had been added to the processional liturgy of Poissy. Codicological evidence suggests that C had access to B's original text and was writing with the express intention of updating and expanding it. The clearest indication of the relationship between these two scribes comes on folio 92, where B has written on the recto and C on the verso. This was probably the final folio of the original manuscript, and B has concluded a series of chants and prayers for burial on the recto, leaving the verso blank. C has then started a set of supplemental prayers for the same occasion on the verso, before adding additional folios with further updates.

As well as appending additional material to the end of the original manuscript, C also inserted new folios between gatherings written by B. Although catchwords have for the most been cropped, they are partly visible in B's hand on fols 31v and 80v. The former instance, in particular, offers insight into the development of this little codex. On the verso of folio 31 scribe B has completed the texts for the procession on the feast of the Purification of the Virgin (25r-31v), and then written the catchword *dominica* (fig. 4). However, the following folio, 32r, is written in the hand of C, and does not contain the word *dominica* or anything like it, instead opening with the rubric *in die cinerum*, followed by material for the Benediction of Ashes and other rites for Ash Wednesday (32r-42r). Next, scribe C has copied a gospel reading for Palm Sunday, followed by material for the blessing of palms (42r-46v). After this, the main processional chants for Palm Sunday begin on fol. 47r, in the hand of scribe B, and opening with the rubric *dominica in ramis palmarum*, to which the catchword *dominica* on fol. 31v must correspond (fig. 5). Indeed, according to the scheme of the prototype Dominican *processionarium*, Palm Sunday should follow directly after the Purification of the Virgin – no material for Ash Wednesday is included. B's original manuscript contained the same scheme with fol. 47 following directly after fol. 31. Scribe C has inserted 15 new folios, exploiting a gap between the gatherings to introduce – in the correct liturgical sequence – material for an additional liturgical occasion, Ash Wednesday, along with prefatory material for Palm Sunday, the next full procession contained in the original manuscript.

Further additions were also made by scribe C, though on all other occasions this material has simply been appended to the end of the original manuscript and does not follow the order of the liturgical calendar. Some of the changes provided supplemental material for occasions already contained in the original, with further chants and prayers not only for Palm Sunday, but also for burial rites and for Maundy Thursday, including the propers for the washing of the altars. Other additions introduced into the processional

entirely new occasions, including Ash Wednesday, the adoration of the Cross on Good Friday, rites for the reception of novices and secular and ecclesiastical dignitaries, and three feasts that had been added to the processional liturgy as celebrated at Poissy. The first of these was Corpus Christi, which was incorporated into the central Dominican processional liturgy in the early fourteenth century and gradually adopted across Europe, and which is absent from the earliest Poissy processionals. The other two feasts were for the Nativity of the Virgin and the Nativity of John the Baptist, added to the processional liturgy of Poissy at some point in the fifteenth century and present in most processional manuscripts copied later than *c.* 1575.⁷¹

The additions made by scribe C updated the manuscript to bring it into line with contemporary practice, and they reflect a growing liturgical workload for the sisters at Poissy, in keeping with a trend visible across the entire Dominican Order.⁷² This campaign was a pragmatic one, designed to maintain a functional resource that would enable the sisters to discharge their growing liturgical duties. C has retained B's textblock, re-used blank folios from the original manuscript, and replicated the relatively sober tone of B's plain and compact format, with no illustrations and only simple initials. Although both scribes copy 5 lines of chant and music per folio, C writes 15 lines of text to the page, six less than scribe B, who squeezes 21 lines of text into his compact textblock. A more consequential difference is that scribe C includes the catchnotes mandated by Dominican liturgical regulations, and may well have been personally familiar with the contexts in which the manuscript would be used. Indeed, this may even be the work of one of the Poissy nuns. Huglo and Naughton have identified a substantial number of processionals made or updated at Poissy in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, probably written by the sisters themselves in archaizing gothic hands.⁷³ The relative uniformity of this work, and its appearance across a very wide range of liturgical manuscripts, suggests that the sisters may have had a scriptorium within the priory, allowing them to undertake the expansion of their liturgical manuscripts themselves. Apparently intended to avoid dramatic departures from the style of older sections of text, the use of these mannered hands suggests a desire to retain, preserve, and imitate early manuscripts, pragmatically balanced against an acknowledgment of the need to maintain accurate and updated texts that met the liturgical needs of the community. The work of scribe C can be located within the vanguard of this period of liturgical change and renewal at Poissy.

Two more scribes made further alterations to the text. In the middle of the sixteenth century scribe D repaired and expanded the manuscript. This work also appears to have been completed in house, albeit by a scribe far less accomplished than C, working with inferior materials. D's work is written on poor quality, stiff vellum in a spidery and unsteady hand that probably dates from the late fifteenth or early sixteenth century (fig. 5). Scribe D has added some further items at the end of the manuscript (200r-209r), providing chants for the feast of the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary and for Trinity Sunday. However, D is also responsible for replacing several damaged folios written by scribe C, containing chants for the Purification of the Altars on Maundy Thursday. Four folios have been supplied by D: 127-128 and 131-132. Folios 129-130 appear to be scribe C's originals. The text up to the end of fol. 132 is coherent and complete. While the tight binding of the manuscript precludes collation, it seems probable that D has replaced two

bifolia (127/132 and 128/131), leaving what must have been the central bifolium of the gathering (129/130) in place. The surrounding folios leave little doubt as to the reason for the repair. Staining and discolouration on fol. 126, immediately before this section, and on fols. 129 and 130, suggest that this part of the manuscript came into contact with some form of liquid (fig. 6). It may well be significant that the chants written on these pages – the Maundy Thursday responsories – were to be sung during a ceremonial rite of purification requiring the use of both balsam and wine, and it is easy to imagine a small liturgical mishap rendering the replaced folios unusable. The repair undertaken by scribe D underscores the fact that processional books such as Downside 61166 were not just ornamental objects to be looked at and admired, but rather working items, designed to be used on the liturgical frontline, open to the elements as well as to balsam, wine, and holy water, and susceptible to damage and abuse. Although the generic responsories contained in this repaired section of the manuscript are all present, concluding in the hand of scribe D on fol. 132v, the next item in Downside 61166, the altar propers, begins imperfectly on fol. 133r. Chants for the first seven of Poissy's altars are missing, and probably an entire gathering appears to have been lost here. This loss could easily have been the result of an error when the manuscript was rearranged and rebound, yet it may not be a coincidence that the only section of the book where the text is incomplete is directly adjacent to the only section which has undergone serious damage and repair.

The repair of Downside 61166, as well as its expansion by D and others, indicates that the nuns continued to use, update, and otherwise maintain their medieval liturgical manuscripts in the early modern period. Indeed, a further expansion of the text was undertaken in the mid-sixteenth century by scribe E (fig. 7), who added a set of chants for a procession on the Octave of Corpus Christi (209v-214v). This item begins on the blank verso of folio 209, on the recto of which D's final insertion ends. E must therefore have been writing after D, and with access to the existing text. Much like scribe C's campaign, this was an intentional and conscious attempt to expand an existing manuscript, and it reflects a continuing interest, on the part of the nuns, in the maintenance of their medieval manuscripts. This final addition is of a very low quality, made on poor and thick parchment in a rough French humanist hand of the mid sixteenth century, and very poorly notated. A similar, if slightly neater hand has copied the same additional chants for the Corpus Christi Octave into at least three other Poissy processional books (Cambridge, Fitzwilliam MS 42; London, BL Add. MS 14845; and TM 636).⁷⁴ Alongside these manuscripts, Downside 61166 is suggestive of a systematic effort to keep the priory's stock of processional books up to date, with the same new offices copied into books at the same time, in the same script, and perhaps even by the same scribe. Perhaps more remarkable still, this work of maintaining medieval liturgical manuscripts continued for a hundred years after cheap commercially printed copies of the Dominican processional first became available in 1493.

The discussion thus far has posited that an original set of chants copied by scribe B was updated, augmented, and repaired in several different campaigns by scribes C, D, and E, each of whom were attempting to maintain the utility of the processional by equipping it with additional chants. One contributor to the text has not yet been mentioned. Scribe A is responsible for the opening 24 folios, which contain a reading from John 13:1-17:26. Scribe A's folios are the most impressive and accomplished within

the manuscript, written in a very good hand on fine and well-produced parchment (fig. 8). On fol. 1r, scribe A's section opens with the only illumination anywhere in the manuscript, a small miniature of the last supper. The image was probably made in Flanders towards the middle of the fifteenth century. It shows Christ and eleven disciples at the last supper, alongside the text of the beginning of John chapter 13. Text and image are surrounded by a full scatter border of naturalistic foliage on gold ground, which has been heavily cropped.

For several reasons, this section stands out from, and is of uncertain relationship to, the rest of the manuscript. In terms of content, there is nothing necessarily unusual about a late-medieval processional containing this long extract from John's gospel. The passage was read during the *mandatum* ceremonies of Maundy Thursday, a liturgical occasion on which, as we have already seen, processional manuscripts were already in use. Several other Poissy processions contain the same passage. Nor is the format and mise-en-page of this section necessarily incongruous. On the contrary, the compact textblock of scribe A's sections is consistent with that found throughout the rest of the manuscript. And yet, this very well made and luxurious part of the text has no Dominican characteristics, and shows no indication whatsoever that it was designed for use by nuns. There is nothing inherent in the text itself to show that it belongs to a processional, or indeed to a liturgical book of any kind. This is a very nicely produced and illustrated extract from scripture, but its only link to Poissy is the fact that it is found within Downside 61166. Unlike other additions, scribe A's work is not integrated with the existing text of the manuscript, and the work feels slightly removed from the life of the sisters in Poissy. Indeed, the image was not made locally in a Parisian workshop, but appears to have been commissioned from an accomplished illuminator working further away in Flanders. Perhaps the nun who ordered this work had familial connections in Lille, Douai, Ghent or Bruges, or else a particular fondness for art produced in Flanders.

In any case, scribe A's work feels slightly more removed from the liturgical work of the sisters at Poissy. Although the textblock indicates that the words and by extension the image probably were designed to be consistent with the format of Downside 61166, the current placement of the material, and particularly the prominent location of the illumination, suggests that the visual appearance of the book, rather than its functionality, was the chief concern here. There is no liturgical explanation for the appearance of material for Maundy Thursday at the beginning of the manuscript, and other insertions have either been integrated into the scheme of the original or appended to the end of the manuscript. The only plausible explanation for this arrangement of material is that scribe A's work has been intentionally placed at the beginning of the manuscript in order to highlight an image that appears to have been specially commissioned from a Flemish illuminator. A brief consideration of the manuscript culture at Poissy, and particularly of role played by the processions in the lives of nuns, will indicate the context in which an addition apparently designed to highlight a single solitary illumination might have been undertaken.

As already noted above, the best explanation for the continued use of medieval manuscripts by the early modern nuns of Poissy is that standard printed equivalents lacked material proper to the priory, such as the important processions for Saint Louis,

the Nativity of John the Baptist, and the Nativity of the Virgin, along with the altar propers for the Maundy Thursday rite of purification. Retaining and updating processional manuscripts was therefore a pragmatic choice dictated by the liturgical needs of the community. The same sense of pragmatism appears to have dictated the tone and style of early processional manuscripts, which are for the most part plain and modest little books with very limited and subdued decoration. Joan Naughton has also suggested that the relative simplicity of this type of book may have allowed it to act as an emblem of an individual nun's identity and vocation.⁷⁵ Although all books were luxury items, the relatively sober tone of early processional manuscripts may have helped the sisters of Poissy – from wealthy aristocratic backgrounds, to cultivate and display a sense of humility, poverty and simplicity. Many of the other liturgical books at the house were splendidly illuminated and deluxe volumes. By comparison, it is easy to see why the simple liturgical functionality reflected in the work of scribes B and C might be considered an embodiment of monastic humility.

Furthermore, processional manuscripts were uniquely well placed to serve as symbols of the vocation of the sisters. These items were not generally owned by the community, instead belonging to individual nuns and often, as here, inscribed with their names. These were personal books, but they also acted as visible and public symbols of the work of the nuns. Indeed, processionals were carried on a number of occasions when liturgical celebration tempered the usually strict enclosure in which the sisters lived. On major festal processions, the route taken by the nuns around their church and cloister as they carried and sang from these manuscripts would have exposed them to the sight of the public, permitted to worship in the transept of the great church of Saint Louis. The processional was therefore, relatively speaking, a highly visible monastic book, embodying the liturgical life of the community. Indeed, some of the additions made to Downside 61166 by scribe C further underscore the public role this book may have played. Privileges conceded to Poissy by Pope John XXII in 1327 offered further relaxations of the usually strict rules of enclosure: if they so desired, Dominican friars and secular clerics were permitted to attend the funerals of Poissy nuns, and family members were allowed to be present for the reception or profession of new members of the community.⁷⁶ Chants for use on all of these occasions were, by convention, copied into the nuns' processionals. In the Downside manuscript, burial rites (89v-115v), along with material for the reception of novices (fols 191r-194v), and of ecclesiastical (fols 194v-197r) and civic (fols 197r-199r) dignitaries, indicate the role this book played as a witness to the rare occasions on which voices from the Poissy cloister were heard by and even raised in honour of outsiders.

The symbolic role played by processionals at Poissy appears to have changed over time, and Naughton proposes that the style of these manuscripts shifted significantly some time around 1500.⁷⁷ While texts produced before this date were relatively simple and capable of conveying a sense of humility, later processionals were ever more richly illuminated, acting as straightforward status symbols for the wealthy nuns who carried them.⁷⁸ Many processionals made after this date were planned with elaborate and luxurious decorative schemes, but older manuscripts could also be enhanced to keep pace with evolving fashions. Poissy's medieval manuscripts represented a tangible connection with the priory's foundation and early history, and additions to these books were often

made with sensitivity to the existing text and a straightforward desire to maintain functionality. However, in the early-modern period updates to these texts were increasingly carried out for aesthetic as well as functional purposes.

One of the most effective ways of upgrading a text was to add luxurious prefatory folios, often containing illuminations. Adding to or rearranging manuscripts to show off illustrations was a common practice in the later middle ages and early modern era. By 1500, the kind of luxurious illuminated prefatory folio found in Downside 61166 was clearly in vogue at Poissy. Several manuscripts commissioned around this time were designed with original opening folios featuring additional decoration such as scatter borders on gold ground.⁷⁹ However, there are a handful of surviving Poissy manuscripts in which, as in Downside 61166, an early-sixteenth century prefatory folio featuring this same style of decorative border has been inserted at the very opening of an otherwise rather plain book. This arrangement appears, for instance, in the processional in a private Paris collection which Naughton has described (and photographed), in which a full-page early-sixteenth century miniature surrounded by a floral border on gold ground has been inserted in front of a largely undecorated processional text from the preceding century.⁸⁰ Of the addition made to the Paris manuscript, Naughton remarks that by inserting a few richly decorated leaves at the beginning of an older text, a 'rather ordinary production was very effectively made to appear more luxurious'. It was presumably in the hope of achieving a similar result that a previous owner of Downside 61166 commissioned scribe A's addition in the mid fifteenth century. The apparently early date of this work raises some questions about the timeframe set out by Naughton, suggesting that the process of change she has identified may not have been the result of a sudden and abrupt shift in tastes, but rather of a gradual development in the preferences of individual nuns.⁸¹ The small illumination in this little book may therefore represent the early stages of the evolution of the format of the Poissy processional. Nevertheless, one single owner may well be responsible for the work of both A and C, reflecting the ways in which both pragmatic and aesthetic concerns motivated the late-medieval nuns to maintain and update their manuscripts.

The book continued to be used, and was rebound in the late sixteenth century. Late medieval processionals were valuable to the priory not only as tangible relics of the priory's origins and early history, but also because they contained bespoke liturgical texts which were proper to Poissy and not available in mass-produced works based on the Dominican prototype. Bindings were important for keeping these useful texts in good condition, but the style of the new binding given to Downside 61166 suggests that, once again, this was an aesthetic as well as pragmatic change. After all, the binding is the most visible part of a book. The current binding is of brown Morocco, with both front and rear featuring a gilt double fillet defining a rectangle tooled with a semis of gilt flame and (oxidised) silver teardrop motifs (fig. 9). Bindings with a tooled semis of alternating motifs were one of the prominent styles available in Paris between 1570 and 1640. Relatively quick to produce, they were significantly cheaper than the full fanfare bindings also becoming popular during this period.⁸² The style became fashionable in Paris during the reign of King Henri III (1573-1589), and is associated in particular with books made for the penitential confraternities he had founded.⁸³ Commissions for these confraternities were often sent to the workshop of Nicolas Ève and his son Clovis, bookbinders popular

with the royal court. Their work for the confraternities tended to feature a semis of two or more symbols, usually surrounding a central medallion of the crucifixion, typically accompanied by a motto.⁸⁴ The parameters of the design allowed for the expression both of the penitential and the royal nature of these organisations and their books. The semis signalled a penitential theme through the inclusion of motifs such as flames, skulls, instruments of the passion, Christograms, and teardrops. Fleurs-de-lis, meanwhile, signalled the broad royal milieu within which the confraternities existed.⁸⁵

Given the aristocratic backgrounds of the nuns of Poissy, it is by no means implausible to suggest that they too may have been exposed to, and capable of partaking in, the latest fashions of the French court. Downside 61166 is an important addition to a small but significant body of evidence demonstrating that a very similar style of penitential binding was both popular with and available to the sisters of the priory of Saint Louis. The binding of the Downside manuscript is very similar to that found on several other processional books from the priory, including Baltimore, Walters Art Gallery W 107; New York, Union Theological Seminary, Bourke Library ms 52; and the processional sold by *Les Enluminures* as TM 925.⁸⁶ Each of these features a tooled semis containing at least one of the two motifs found on Downside 61166. The binding of TM 925, judging by the description and images in the sales listing, is remarkably similar to that of the Downside manuscript, each featuring an alternating pattern of gilt flames and (oxidised) silver teardrops. Different tools appear to have been used to work these two matching bindings, but the similarity is unlikely to be a coincidence. Perhaps the fashion simply became popular with individual nuns at Poissy, many of whom would have been well-resourced enough to procure for themselves what Naughton calls ‘modish, gilt, penitential, covers’.⁸⁷ Processional books were privately owned, and the bindings may reflect shifting trends in private tastes. On the other hand, it has been established that on more than one occasion the priory met the expense of refurbishing books, and this uniformity of style may indicate that there was a structured system by which the nuns sent out multiple manuscripts to be bound according to a predetermined style and design.⁸⁸

Once rebound, the book presumably entered circulation in the priory once again, eventually coming into the possession of sister Françoise de Dracqueville. Françoise had entered the house by 1640, and was still living in 1693.⁸⁹ It is not known when she acquired the processional, but her name appears on the front and rear pastedowns and on several blank folios. The identification of Françoise as one of the nuns who owned Downside 61166 offers some insight into the post-medieval manuscript culture of Poissy. In addition to the processional, she also owned at least one other surviving liturgical manuscript, a sequentiary (prosar) which is now British Library, Egerton, MS 2601.⁹⁰ Her name has been written on the front pastedown of this manuscript, in the same hand in which it appears in Downside 61166 (fig. 1), and in both books it is almost certainly her autograph.⁹¹

Several aspects of the Egerton sequentiary are of relevance to the present discussion of Françoise and her processional. Each of the books has been equipped with an index in French, added in the seventeenth century and providing a list of contents that would have greatly facilitated efficient use of the volume. In the sequentiary (Egerton 2601), the index appears at the end of the book, and corresponds to page numbers that

must have been added to either side of each folio in ink at around the same time. In the processional (Downside 61166), a list of contents has been added to blank folios at the beginning of the book, corresponding to folio numbers, in ink, and dated in the top right-hand corner to 1645. The manuscripts therefore use slightly different apparatus, which have been written in different hands. The presence of these finding aids indicates that the texts were still being used routinely, whilst the fact that the indices are given in the vernacular may reflect a degree of hesitancy with Latin. Printed books, widely available by the mid-seventeenth century, had started to popularise numbering systems, indices, and lists of contents, and it is remarkable that at Poissy the sisters decided to supply their medieval manuscripts with these conveniences, rather than sourcing or commissioning printed volumes of their liturgy.

Nuns such as Françoise, who could well have been responsible for the index and numbers in either of these books, continued to use and value manuscripts, so much so that they often bequeathed them to intimate friends or family members within the community. Whilst the Downside manuscript can be associated only with one nun, Françoise, the sequentiary in the British Library can be connected to several others. The front pastedown bearing Françoise's autograph also contains several further notes. One, as transcribed by Christopher de Hamel and Joan Naughton, reads: 'Cy livre avec un autre de messe(s) doit estre recevoyr aux Dames de Melleville et de Hennequin religieuse(s) de Poissy et qui une lesone prester(?) fut len faire un de (nuestre dame?)'.⁹² Since both of these sisters held positions of seniority in the community they could be named here either as representatives of the priory or else as the private owners of the book. Presumably, the sequentiary was either bequeathed to them or else was left under their stewardship, and was subsequently sent out for binding. The reference to 'un autre livre du mese' is intriguing. There is no indication that this other book, like the sequentiary, was also a former possession of Françoise, and this is probably not a reference to the processional which, strictly speaking, is not a 'mass book'. The note is, however, a further reminder that the kind of manuscripts once owned by Françoise were not always treated as individual items, and that several books could be bequeathed, repaired, expanded, or sent out for re-binding together. Whilst we do not know what happened to Downside 61166 after Françoise died, there is a good chance that it too passed into the ownership of sisters nominated by her, or else was absorbed into the priory's communal stock of liturgical books to be refreshed, revised, and then redistributed as needed.

Conclusion

Through a close analysis of Downside 61166, this article has revealed the house for which it was made and the identity of one its former owners, as well as the various stages of this manuscript's development. This is by no means the only processional to survive from Poissy, and indeed it is by locating this manuscript within a broader corpus of liturgical books produced for the abbey that the features and peculiarities of Downside 61166 become clearest, illuminating the changing tastes of the sisters who owned it, and reflecting a vibrant culture of book production and book ownership in medieval and post-

medieval female monastic settings. The manuscript was first designed as a compact, plain, and functional book, minimal in its contents and decoration. Without rich illumination, or particularly striking features, the original book was useful enough on purely practical grounds to be cared for, repaired, and expanded on four separate occasions over the course of several centuries. These updates to the book's contents ensured that it retained its functionality as a resource for singing the processional liturgy of Poissy, and it remained in regular use. However, by the end of the middle ages the manuscript appears to have had an increasing capacity to serve as a status symbol that reinforced the identity of the nuns who owned it. As such, it was equipped with a luxurious prefatory folio and, later, a fashionable binding.

Processionals are a genre offering a unique glimpse into the devotional lives of the medieval nuns of Poissy, not least because these were the books used during those rare occasions when men and women from outside the community were permitted to attend rites of burial, reception, and profession. Downside 61166 reflects the limited public aspects of female monastic identity. It is also a witness not just to premodern women owning and reading books, but also to women who themselves wrote, repairing and expanding this little manuscript. When changes in the processional liturgy rendered it obsolete, the nuns updated it; when it was damaged during use, the nuns repaired it. When its sober tone fell out of fashion, they refurbished it; and when the technology of printing transformed textual cultures, they not only retained it, but equipped it with the conveniences of folio numbers and a contents page. In all, Downside 61166 suggests that the nuns came to view their medieval liturgical manuscripts not just as essential practical resources, but also as cherished items, handed down from generation to generation and worth preserving well after the advent of the printed book. Perhaps more importantly, comparison with other manuscripts from Poissy suggests that the treatment of this processional was not unique – it was expanded and refurbished alongside a range of equivalent books, and the uniformity of much of this work implies that there was an organised system within the priory for maintaining items such as this. Well-looked after and subject to continued use, this relatively plain little manuscript, Downside 61166, had an enduring appeal for the nuns of Poissy and now represents an important and hitherto unknown witness to the life and devotional culture of the famous priory, offering with every turn of its small folios further echoes of female voices from the medieval cloister.

Appendix: Description of Downside 61166

Processional, Use of the Dominican Nuns of the Priory of Saint Louis, Poissy. Made in Paris and Poissy, s. xiv with additions to s. xvi.

Downside MS 61166 is a small book, fitting comfortably in the palm of a single hand, and measuring 100 x 62 x 35 mm. [viii + 214 + i]. It contains 223 vellum folios, which have been incorrectly foliated in pen in a seventeenth-century hand as follows: [i-viii], 1-179, 190-224, [i]. A partial list of contents in French and corresponding folio numbers were added to fol. 1r at around the same time as the foliation. An originally blank vellum

gathering of eight folios at the beginning of the book (now containing the contents list, notes, and booksellers' marks) and a blank vellum folio at the end of the book have not been numbered. The foliation skips numbers 180-189, running from fol. 179 to fol. 190. There is no interruption to the text at this point, so this is almost certainly a foliation error and not the result of the removal of part of the book. The folios have been trimmed, occasionally cropping decoration and also eliminating most of the catchwords, two of which are still partially visible on the base of fols 31v and 80v. With the exception of material apparently missing before fol. 133, the text is coherent and logically complete, and the manuscript is for the most part in good condition, though with evidence of damage and subsequent repair to fols 126-132. The tight binding of this little book precludes full collation, but it appears to be comprised primarily of gatherings of eight folios. Ruled space throughout the manuscript is approximately 78 x 40 mm, accommodating single columns of between 15 and 21 long lines of text, or up to 5 lines of noted text, with square musical notation on bold red 4-line staves. There is some minimal decoration, in general limited to blue and red initials of 2 or no more than three 3 and some marginal pen flourishes, with only a single illustration present in the manuscript (fol. 1r) and no evidence that a major scheme of illumination was ever planned. The current binding is not original but is intact, though worn in some places. The binding is of brown Morocco tooled with a semis of gold flame and (oxidised) silver tear-drop motifs, and dating probably to very the end of the sixteenth century.

Hands

The manuscript is a composite work repeatedly expanded and repaired over several centuries, and it contains the hands of at least five different contributors, identified here as scribes A-E.

Scribe A is responsible for fols. 1r-25r, and writes in a strong textualis semi-quadrata in blank ink on good quality vellum with 15 lines to the page. This section contains the only illustration in the manuscript, a small miniature of the last supper on fol. 1r, made in Flanders in the mid fifteenth century. The only text in this section is a long reading from the Gospel according to John.

Scribe B, writing in a slightly smaller, earlier, and rounder hand is responsible for the oldest sections of the manuscript, fols 26r-31v, and 47r-92r. Scribe B writes in a dark brown ink with 21 long lines to the page, lightly ruled in red ink. Rubrics are in red, initials in red and blue with some occasional flourishes and border decoration, dating from the early fifteenth century. Musical notation is without catchnotes, on 4-line staves in a bold red ink, with 5 bars of noted text to the page. This original core contains chants and prayers essential to the processional liturgy at Poissy.

Scribe C is responsible for over half of the content in the manuscript, fols 32r-46r, 92v-126r, 129r-130v, and 133r-199r. C writes in black ink in a mannered textualis hand, dating to the mid or late fifteenth century and possibly belonging to one of the nuns at Poissy, where the early modern sisters are known to have copied their own books using an archaising script such as this. These sections contain 15 lines to the page, ruled in a light red ink. New sections are sometimes marked by initials up to two lines high either in

red and blue or with faded colour washes, along with rubrics in red. Musical notation includes catchnotes and is on 4-line staves in a bold red ink, with 5 lines of text and music to the page. Scribe C's sections contain a wide range modifications and additions to the processional liturgy, along with some associated material.

Scribe D is responsible for fols 127r-128v, 131r-132v, 200r-209r, writing in black ink in a much less accomplished and somewhat undeveloped hand from the turn of the sixteenth century. The text block matches that of the rest of the manuscript, and there are 15 long lines to the page, though the scribe routinely exceeds the lines and borders, which have been roughly ruled. There are no initials or decorations, rubrics are given in red ink, with some corrections also made in red ink, as, for instance, on fol 201v. Musical notation is given without catchnotes on roughly-ruled 4-line red staves, with 5 bars of noted text to the page. Scribe D is responsible for some repairs to sections of the book originally written by Scribe C, along with the addition of some new liturgical material. Mid sixteenth century.

The final section of the book is the work of scribe E, writing on fols 209v-214v in an informal French humanist hand in black ink. There are 4 lines of noted text to the page, with very roughly ruled 4-line red staves, and notation without catchnotes. Initials are crudely drawn in red and some rubrics have been added above the top line. Scribe E made further, minor, liturgical additions. Late sixteenth century.

Contents

The manuscript contains chants and prayers for use in processions and on certain other liturgical occasions, following the use of the Dominican nuns of the priory of Saint Louis, Poissy. The contents are: Gospel Reading for Maundy Thursday (fols. 1r-24v), Procession for Feast of the Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary (25r-31v), Ash Wednesday: Benediction of Ashes (32r-42r), Procession for Palm Sunday (42v-55v), Maundy Thursday: Mandatum (55v-64v), Good Friday: Adoration of the Cross (64v-67v), Procession for Easter Sunday (67v-69r) Procession for Feast of the Ascension (70r-73v), Procession for the Feast of Saint Dominic (73v-76v), Procession for the Feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary (77r-81v), Procession for the Feast of Saint Louis (81v-86r), Sequence for Saint Katherine (86r-89r), Office for Burial (89v-115v), Maundy Thursday: Responsories (115v-132v), Maundy Thursday: Altar Propers for Rite of Purification (133r-150v) [begins imperfectly], Maundy Thursday: Kyrie (150v-152r), Good Friday: Tracts and Adoration of the Cross (150v-174v), Procession for the Feast of Corpus Christi (174-180r), Procession for the Feast of John the Baptist (180r-186r), Procession for the feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary (186r-191r), Reception of Novices (191r-194v), Reception of Legates and Prelates (194v-197r), Reception of Secular Princes (197v-199r), Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary (200r-204v), Trinity Sunday (205r-209r), Chants for the Octave of Corpus Christi (209v-214v).

Ownership

The word Dracqueville has been written in the same hand in four different places in the manuscript: on the front and rear pastedowns, on the verso of the unnumbered fol. i,

underneath the index, and on the otherwise blank fol. 209v. This is the autograph of Françoise de Dracqueville, who was a nun at Poissy c. 1640 – c. 1693. Other dealers' marks and price codes are found on the opening folios, and fol. 1r bears the quaint *ex libris* 'sum liber J. C. Jackson'. If this refers to the collector the Rev. J. C. Jackson then it was not part of the sale of his library at Sotheby's in 1895.

Acknowledgements

Several of the ideas and arguments presented above were the subject of a workshop held at Downside Abbey as part of the 21st International Sermon Studies Symposium, hosted by the University of Bristol university in July 2018. I wish to thank participants for their reflections on the text and their helpful suggestions. In particular, I would like to thank Ilya Dines for his generous advice on several aspects of the palaeography of this manuscript, along with George Ferzoco and Carolyn Muessig, who have supported this research in a number of different ways. I would also like to thank Dr. Simon Johnson and Steve Parsons at Downside Abbey for their assistance in accessing this and other manuscripts. All images are reproduced with the kind permission of Downside Abbey Library.

¹ The other, MS 61164 was listed as *MSS. Heures, Vie de Saint Margues*, attributed to fifteenth-century Rheims by the catalogue. Two early printed works were part of the same donation, they are recorded as '*Breviarum Herbipolense*, Psalterium only, Eichstätt, 1485' and '*Missale ad usum Insignis Ecclesiae Salisburgensis*, Paris, 1555'.

² Neil Ker, *Medieval Manuscripts in British Libraries*, 5 vols (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1969-2002), vol. 2, p. 477.

³ The author of the note has not been identified, but the hand does not seem to be that of Dom. Aelred Watkin. The handwritten note reads: 'This 15c Processional for Dominican nuns of Dracqueville lacks original M.S. on pp. 127, 128, 131, 132 – supplied in later M.S. ?17thC. P. 133 begins at middle of antiphon commemorating St. Martin. Altars I think visited Maundy Thursday. Original M.S. otherwise complete ends p. 209. [P.T.O.] sequence for St. Catherine I believe unique.'

⁴ It reads: 'This book contains Processionale secundum usum Sororum Ordinins Sancti Dominici, & Officium Sepultura, & Receptio Noviciorum.'

⁵ Ker, *Medieval Manuscripts*, vol. 5: Indexes and Addenda, ed. I. C. Cunningham and A. G. Watson, p. 10, n. 142.

⁶ M. Huglo, *Les manuscrits du Processional*, 2 vols, Répertoire international des sources musicales B XIV (1-2) (Munich: G. Henle, 1999-2004), vol. 2, GB 16/2.

⁷ The most recent study of medieval processional chant is Clyde W. Brockett, *The Repertory of Processional Antiphons* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2018). On this genre of manuscript see in particular the of Michel Huglo, esp. *Les livres de chant liturgique*, Typologie des sources du moyen âge occidental 52 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1988), pp. 110-111; idem, 'Processional', in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. Stanley Sadie, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), vol. 20, pp. 388-393; and idem, *Les manuscrits du Processional*, 2 vols. See also P. M. Gy, 'Collectaire, rituel, processional', *Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques* 44 (1960), pp. 441-69; and Terence Bailey, *The Processions of Sarum and the Western Church* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1971).

⁸ Anne Yardley, *Performing Piety in Medieval English Nunneries* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), p. 113.

⁹ Huglo, *Livres de Chante*, pp. 110-111.

¹⁰ Presumably it was copied from an existing processional for nuns, or else the scribe made the necessary adaptations as they worked. In any case, the feminine forms have *not* always been substituted. See for instance fol. 99v: 'pie recordationis affectu fratres charissimi'; fol. 109r: 'oremus fratres carissimi'; fol. 113r ff. 'cantor'; and fol. 150v. 'due fratres ante gradus altaris dicant'. Relatively minor inconsistencies of this kind are not uncommon in medieval nuns' liturgical texts of this type.

¹¹ The particular significance of processions within a female monastic context is discussed at greater length in Yardley, *Performing Piety*, pp. 113-115. The devotional culture of late medieval Dominican nunneries is also discussed by Sandy Gale in a separate article in this volume, addressing a devotional text owned by the nuns of Dartford Priory.

¹² Huglo, 'Processional', p. 390.

¹³ For details of this context, see the classic account of the development of the Order of Friars Preacher, William Hinnebusch, *History of the Dominican Order*, 2 vols (New York: Alba House, 1966-1973)

¹⁴ On the early Dominican liturgy see Bonniwell, *A History of the Dominican Liturgy 1215-1945* (New York: Joseph F. Wagner, 1945), esp. pp. 18-27 on the early period, and pp. 76-78 on the commission of Four Friars. Bonniwell was of the opinion that several friars, possibly including Dominic himself, had made earlier if largely fruitless efforts to standardise Dominican liturgical practice. On the other hand, for the argument that the Four Friars made the first attempt to unify Dominican liturgy, and that there is little evidence that diversity was a source of concern prior to 1244, see Leonard E. Boyle, 'A Material Consideration of Santa Sabina MS. XIV L1' in *Aux origines de la liturgie dominicaine: le manuscrit Santa Sabina XIV L1*, ed. Leonard E. Boyle and Pierre-Marie Gy (Rome: École française de Rome, 2004), p. 19. As Anna Welch has recently observed, this first Dominican liturgical reform was almost exactly contemporaneous with a major program of liturgical reform and standardisation within the Franciscan Order. See Welch, *Liturgy, Books, and Franciscan Identity in Medieval Umbria* (Leiden: Brill, 2015), pp. 82-87.

¹⁵ Santa Sabina MS XIV L 1. There is some debate about exactly how many copies were prepared. See Eleanor Giraud, 'The Dominican *Scriptorium* at Saint-Jacques, and its Production of Liturgical Exemplars' in *Scriptorium. Wesen. Funktion. Eigenheiten*. Kolloquium, (Bayerische Akademie der Wissenschaften: Munich, 2015), pp. 247-258, here p. 248 n. 4.

¹⁶ British Library Additional ms 23935. See also Bonniwell, *Dominican Liturgy*, pp. 94-96.

¹⁷ Michel Huglo, 'Dominican and Franciscan Books: Similarities and Differences between Their Notations', in *The Calligraphy of Medieval Music*, ed. John Haines (Turnhout: Brepols, 2011), pp. 195-202, here p. 199. Some manuscripts still retain the word 'correctus' at the end of gatherings. If Downside 61166 was ever corrected in this way, the certification has been trimmed.

¹⁸ Bonniwell, *Dominican Liturgy*, p. 196.

¹⁹ Bonniwell, *Dominican Liturgy*, pp. 85-94. See also Giraud 'The Dominican *Scriptorium* at St-Jacques', p. 248, and Joan Naughton, 'From Unillustrated Book to Illustrated Book', *Manuscripta*, vol. 43/44 (2003), pp. 161-188, here pp. 162-63.

²⁰ Bonniwell, *Dominican Liturgy*, pp. 224-225. Bonniwell explains that many of the brothers opposed to the new feast objected that they already celebrated the body of the Lord in the Eucharist each and every day, and that *Corpus Christi* was therefore redundant. The General Chapter continued to issue reminders about this new feast throughout the 14th century.

²¹ Most written by scribe B and contained within fols 25r-81v, though two separate sets of chants for *Corpus Christi* (fols 174v-180r; 209v-214v) have been added, on separate occasions, by scribe C and scribe D respectively.

²² Huglo, 'Processional', p. 391.

²³ David Hiley, *Western Plainchant: A Handbook* (Oxford: Clarendon Press 1993), pp. 318-319.

²⁴ Huglo, 'Processional', p. 390.

²⁵ On the history of the priory of Poissy, see Alain Erlande-Brandenburg, 'La priorale Saint-Louis de Poissy', *Bulletin Monumental*, vol. 129 (1971), pp. 85-112, Joan Naughton, *Manuscripts from the Dominican Monastery of Saint-Louis de Poissy*, PhD thesis, University of Melbourne (1995), and also Susan Moreau-Rendu, *Le prieuré royal de Saint-Louis de Poissy* (Colmar, Éditions Alsatia, 1968). Erlande-Brandenburg, 'Saint-Louis de Poissy', p. 91, indicates that Philip had probably conceived the foundation prior to Louis' formal canonization, which took place at the hands of Pope Boniface VIII on 11 August 1297, since building work on the church began just a few months later.

²⁶ For a French translation of the charter see Moreau-Rendu, *Saint-Louis de Poissy*, pp. 312-315, here p. 312. See also Naughton, *Manuscripts from Poissy*, p. 38 n. 8. The foundation charter states that Louis was

said to have been born at Poissy, and some later chroniclers disagreed. However, the notion that Louis was born at Poissy became popular in late medieval tradition and is frequently repeated in modern scholarship. In any case, the association between Louis and Poissy is certainly not disingenuous; at the time of his birth Poissy was certainly one of the principal residences and sources of revenue for his parents, Blanche of Castille and her husband the future King Louis VIII. See Lindy Grant, *Blanche of Castille, Queen of France* (London: Yale University Press, 2016), pp. 44-48.

²⁷ For details of correspondence between King Philip and the Dominican Provincial Minister for France, see Moreau-Rendu, *Saint-Louis de Poissy*, pp. 38-39.

²⁸ Moreau-Rendu, *Saint-Louis de Poissy*, p. 40 and pp. 312-315 for the relevant clauses in the foundation charter.

²⁹ Naughton, *Manuscripts from Poissy*, p. 77.

³⁰ On expenditure associated with the building works, see Erlande-Brandenburg, 'Saint-Louis de Poissy', pp. 90-92. On the books, see Naughton, *Manuscripts from Poissy*, pp. 39-40.

³¹ Erlande-Brandenburg, 'Saint-Louis de Poissy', p. 93.

³² M. Cecilia Gaposchkin, 'Philip the Fair, the Dominicans, and the liturgical Office for Louis IX: new perspectives on Ludovicus Decus Regnantium', in *Plainsong and Medieval Music*, vol. 13 (2004), pp. 33-61, here p. 53 n. 79.

³³ The sisters were forced to withdraw to Paris in the 1340s when the English occupied the town of Poissy, but the retreat did not spare them from the plague, which reached Paris in the summer of 1348. Further details of the history of the priory and its fortunes can be found in Moreau-Rendu, *Saint-Louis de Poissy*. For perceptions of moral laxity amongst the nuns at Poissy, see Gary Ferguson, 'Rules for Writing: The Dames De Poissy', in *The Cloister and the World: Early Modern Convent Voices*, ed. Thomas M. Carr (Charlottesville, VA: Rookwood, 2007), pp. 44-58. On the resistance of the community to reform, see Naughton, *Manuscripts from Poissy*, pp. 135-139.

³⁴ Naughton, *Manuscripts from Poissy*. On literary culture at Poissy see also Ferguson, 'Rules for Writing'.

³⁵ See Naughton, *Manuscripts from Poissy*, p. 25.

³⁶ M. Cecilia Gaposchkin, *The Making of Saint Louis: Kingship, Sanctity, and Crusade in the Later Middle Ages* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2008), p. 80. The text of *Nunc Laudare* can be found in *Analecta Hymnica*, v. 13 (1892), n. 74, pp. 194-197.

³⁷ Gaposchkin, 'Philip the Fair', p. 57.

³⁸ Gaposchkin, 'Philip the Fair', p. 53.

³⁹ Gaposchkin, *Making of Saint Louis*, p. 81. The text of *Ludovicus Decus* is edited and translated in M. Cecilia Gaposchkin (ed. and trans), *Blessed Louis, the Most Glorious of Kings: Texts Relating to the Cult of Saint Louis of France* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2012), pp. 160-207, cf. *Analecta Hymnica*, v. 13 (1892), n. 71, pp. 185-188.

⁴⁰ The provenance of these processional chants has not previously been identified. The festal procession required three sets of responsories and two antiphons. All of those used at Poissy on the feast of Saint Louis are also found in the office *Nunc Laudare*. They are: *Felix regnum cuius rex* (third matins responsory), *Rex erigit terram* (versicle for the above), *Regnum mundi supergressus* (sixth matins responsory), *Pergere iacob egressus patris* (versicle for the above), *O sparsor diuiciarum* (ninth matins responsory) *Qui tot egris prestitisti* (versicle for the above), *O decus ecclesie* (antiphon *super psalmos* for second vespers), and *Ludouice rex francorum* (antiphon *ad magnificat*, for second vespers). For the text see *Analecta Hymnica*, v. 13 (1892), no. 74, pp. 194-197. Only four of these chants were re-used in *Ludovicus decus*. *Regnum Mundi supergressus* and *Pergere iacob egressus* (ninth pairing of responsory/versicle for nocturns), *Ludouice rex Francorum* (first antiphon from second vespers), and *O decus ecclesie* (sixth antiphon for second vespers). See Gaposchkin, *Blessed Louis*, pp. 160-207 and *Analecta Hymnica*, v. 13 (1892), n. 71 pp. 185-188.

⁴¹ Naughton, *Manuscripts from Poissy*, p. 109.

⁴² On Dominican liturgical interest in the Virgin Mary see for instance, Bonniwell, *Dominican Liturgy*, p. 145. The manuscript copy of the Deeds and Miracles of the Virgin Mary which once belonged to the nuns of Poissy is now Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Codices latini monacenses 10156. Cf. Naughton, *Manuscripts from Poissy*, p. 181, and her description of the manuscript on pp. 351-52.

⁴³ The other feast pertaining to John the Baptist, that of his beheading, was raised to the highest rank of totum duplex in 1365, for which see Bonniwell, *Dominican Liturgy*, p. 222. More broadly, see Naughton, *Manuscripts from Poissy*, p. 82.

⁴⁴ It is now London, British Library Additional MS 32579. For a description, see Naughton, *Manuscripts from Poissy*, pp. 326-37.

⁴⁵ Moreau-Rendu, *Saint-Louis de Poissy*, p. 313.

⁴⁶ 'Chronicon Girardi de Fracheto et anonyma ejusdem operis continuatio', in *Recueil des Historiens des Gaules et de la France*, vol. 21 (1855), p. 23: 'Dominica ante Nativitatem sancti Johannis Baptistae, positae sunt sorores ordinis fratrum praedicatorum apud Pyssiacum Carnotensis diocesis in monasterio noviter a rege Philippo constructo in honore gloriosi confessoris, quondam regis Franciae Ludovici'. Translation my own. On the arrival of the sisters see also Naughton, *Manuscripts from Poissy*, p. 43, and Erlande-Brandenburg, 'Saint-Louis de Poissy', p. 92, along with the alternative text of the French chronicle in *Les Grandes Chroniques de France*, ed. Jules Viard, vol. 8, p. 236: '1304... le dimenche devant la Nativité monseigneur saint Jehan Baptiste, furent mises souers de l'orde des Frères Prescheurs à Poissi, en la dyocèse de Chartres, en une eglise nouvellement edefiée du roy Philippe.'

⁴⁷ Moreau-Rendu, *Saint-Louis de Poissy*, p. 312.

⁴⁸ At least, this was the procedure prescribed in the Minister General's exemplar, British Library Additional MS 23935, fol. 99v. Naughton has identified rubrics and brief instructions, consistent with those in the exemplar, in several Poissy manuscripts. See *Manuscripts from Poissy*, p. 153.

⁴⁹ As, for example, in the Poissy processional now owned by Reed College, sold by Christie's London on 19 November 2003. The manuscript has been fully digitised and can be viewed via <https://rdc.reed.edu/c/poissy/home/> [accessed 10 Aug 2019]. The combined chants for the rite of the purification are on fols 25r-48r.

⁵⁰ As, for instance, in another Poissy processional, Barnard Castle, Bowes Museum, MS 091/MED/3, fol. 17v.

⁵¹ As suggested by Huglo, 'Processional', p. 392.

⁵² See Moreau-Rendu, *Saint-Louis de Poissy*, p. 56, cf. Naughton, *Manuscripts from Poissy*, p. 264.

⁵³ Naughton, *Manuscripts from Poissy*, p. 35.

⁵⁴ For an example see the Poissy processional held at Bryn Mawr, MS 51, fol. 114r. A full scan of this manuscript is available via <http://brynmawrcollections.org/poissyprocessional/> [accessed 10 Aug 2019].

⁵⁵ Curiously, a different sequence for Saint Katherine has been copied into the processional section of a combined Prosar-processional from Poissy held in a private Paris collection and described in Naughton, *Manuscripts from Poissy*, no. 61, pp. 401-403.

⁵⁶ *Analecta Hymnica*, v. 40 (1902), p. 229, n. 259.

⁵⁷ Naughton, *Manuscripts from Poissy*, p. 34 and p. 259. Cf. *Analecta Hymnica* in the note above, where the text is taken from a Poissy manuscript.

⁵⁸ Including this example, I am aware of 47 processionals which have been connected with Poissy, Joan Naughton listed 27. Michel Huglo has identified a further 4. To which can be added 15 sold or for sale on the open market: the Poissy processionals sold by Les Enluminures ('Texts Manuscripts') as TM no. 323, no. 524, no. 626, no. 636, no. 649 (now owned by Bryn Mawr, MS 51), and no. 925; those sold by Christie's on 13 December 1984 (lot 128), on 19 November 2003 (lot 27) (now owned by Reed College), and on 16 July 2014 (lot 25, this manuscript appears recently to have been offered for sale again by Sokol Books of London); those sold by Sotheby's on 2 December 1997 (lot 84), 3 December 2002 (lot 5, now Pierpont Morgan MS M 1153), 17 June 2003 (lot 86), and 22 June 2004 (lot 81, previously Stonyhurst College MS 78); that sold by Hotel Drouot Richelieu on 31 May 2002 (lot 65); and that which is, at the time of writing, listed for sale by Hugues de Latude, inventory no. 13826.

⁵⁹ Naughton, *Manuscripts from Poissy*, p. 201.

⁶⁰ Huglo, 'Processional', p. 391.

⁶¹ Terrence Bailey, *The Processions of Sarum*, pp. x, xii, 3, cf. pp. 81-92.

⁶² Naughton, *Manuscripts from Poissy*, pp. 109-110.

⁶³ For a helpful overview of the contents of processionals, see Naughton, *Manuscripts from Poissy*, Appendix 5c, pp. 264-268.

⁶⁴ Joan Naughton has demonstrated that early processionals from the house lacked illustration and elaborate ornamentation, and that only from the 16th century onwards did illumination become a common feature in these books. the case is made at length in 'From Unillustrated Book', esp. p. 163, but see also more broadly the characterisation of early processionals as practical and humble books throughout *Manuscripts from Poissy*, for instance on pp. 13, 114, 120-1, 205.

⁶⁵ Naughton, *Manuscripts from Poissy*, p. 97.

⁶⁶ See Giraud, 'The Dominican *Scriptorium*' for discussion of Saint-Jacques. On the nature of the Parisian book trade in this period see Mary Rouse and Richard Rouse, *Manuscripts and their makers: commercial book producers in medieval Paris, 1200-1500*, 2 vols (Turnhout: Brepols, 2000) esp. pp. 73-97.

⁶⁷ A similar argument regarding the copying of another early Poissy processional lacking catchnotes, Waddesdon Manor MS 02, is put forward in Naughton, *Manuscripts from Poissy*, p. 240. For rules surrounding the copying of Dominican liturgical texts, and the inclusion of catchnotes, see Huglo, 'Dominican and Franciscan Books'. On the relationship between early Dominican scribes and notators, see Giraud, 'The Dominican *Scriptorium*', esp. pp. 250, 255-256.

⁶⁸ In *Manuscripts from Poissy* it is catalogued as no. 61 on pp. 401-403.

⁶⁹ Naughton, *Manuscripts from Poissy*, p. 114.

⁷⁰ The smallest text block in a recorded Poissy processional is in the combined psalter-processional made in Paris in the 1330s and now in the collection of Waddesdon Manor, with written space of just 71 x 42 mm. In this instance, whilst the processional sections themselves are not illustrated, the small area of written space matches that found across the rest of the manuscript, where a small text block is dictated by a lavish decorative scheme. See Waddesdon Manor MS 02, described in Naughton, *Manuscripts from Poissy*, no. 71, pp. 418-420. Of dimensions broadly comparable to Downside 61166 is the text block of a single leaf from a Poissy processional, sold at auction in 1987. The written space is 76 x 50 mm. See Naughton, *Manuscripts from Poissy*, no. 1, p. 285. The leaf itself is similar in style and dimensions to the Waddesdon Manor processional, suggesting that the format of Downside 61166 emulates an early corpus of highly compact Poissy processionals.

⁷¹ Naughton, *Manuscripts from Poissy*, Appendix 5c, pp. 264-268.

⁷² C's other additions include a range of supplementary chants, prayers, and readings conventionally found in late medieval processionals, especially those from Poissy. On increasing liturgical requirements within the Dominican Order, see Bonniwell, *Dominican Liturgy*, p. 237.

⁷³ Naughton, *Manuscripts from Poissy*, pp. 133, 194. Michel Huglo 'Les processionaux de Poissy', in *Rituels: mélanges offerts à Pierre-Marie Gy*, ed. P. De Clerck and E. Palazzo (Paris, 1990), pp. 339-446. The number of processionals produced in this period may reflect the controversial efforts to reform the priory during this period, and the subsequent increase in population.

⁷⁴ Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum MS 42, fols 76r-77v, cf. Naughton, *Manuscripts from Poissy*, no. 11, pp. 301-303; London, British Library, Additional MS 14845, fols 67r-70v., cf. Naughton, *Manuscripts from Poissy*, no. 20, pp. 322-324; and the item sold as TM 636, unnumbered folios at beginning, shown in sales catalogue, accessible online via: <http://www.textmanuscripts.com/medieval/processional-poissy-60891> [accessed 10 Aug 2019].

⁷⁵ *Manuscripts from Poissy*, p. 120.

⁷⁶ Naughton, *Manuscripts from Poissy*, p. 8.

⁷⁷ The argument is made throughout *Manuscripts from Poissy*, see in particular p. 120. A more sustained and focused treatment of this issue can be found in Naughton, 'From Unillustrated Book'.

⁷⁸ Notwithstanding her earlier comments regarding humility, Naughton also asserts that processional manuscripts were able to act as status symbols. See *Manuscripts from Poissy*, p. 152.

⁷⁹ So, for instance, the manuscript sold as TM 636, description with images online via <http://www.textmanuscripts.com/medieval/processional-poissy-60891> [accessed 10 Aug 2019]. See also processionals sold at Sotheby's on 20 June 1995 (lot 108), and on 6 December 1983 (lot 90). They are catalogued in Naughton, *Manuscripts from Poissy*, as no. 31, pp. 340-341, and no. 29, pp. 337-339, respectively. In all three manuscripts the original, early-sixteenth century first folio is bordered by a full design of flowers and foliage on gold ground, that is not repeated later on in the text.

⁸⁰ Naughton, *Manuscripts from Poissy*, no. 61, pp. 401-403.

⁸¹ Naughton suggests that the shift in tastes may have been fairly abrupt, 'From Unillustrated Book', esp. p. 167.

⁸² Paul Needham, *Twelve Centuries of Bookbindings, 400-1600* (New York: Pierpont Morgan Library and Oxford University Press, 1979), p. 289.

⁸³ Howard Nixon, *Sixteenth-century gold-tooled bookbindings in the Pierpont Morgan Library* (New York: Pierpont Morgan Library, 1971), p. 217.

⁸⁴ Geoffrey Hobson, *Les reliures à la fanfare: le problème de l'S fermé* (London: The Chiswick Press, 1935), pp. 51-55, Needham, *Twelve Centuries*, pp. 254-257.

⁸⁵ Bindings of this kind held by the Pierpont Morgan Library have been particularly well-studied. See for instance MS 292 (discussed in Needham, *Twelve Centuries*, pp. 287-89), MS 927 (discussed in Needham,

Twelve Centuries, pp. 290-93, and no. 57 in Nixon, *Gold-tooled bookbindings*), MS 1845 (discussed in Needham, *Twelve Centuries*, pp. 254-257), MS 15454 (no. 55a in Nixon, *Gold-tooled bookbindings*) and MS 55184 (no. 55b in Nixon, *Gold-tooled bookbindings*).

⁸⁶ Baltimore, Walters MS W107, is no. 2 in Naughton, *Manuscripts from Poissy*, pp. 285-288; New York, Union Seminary, ms 52 is no. 43, pp. 360-363; TM 925 is described with photographs in the catalogue entry online via: <http://www.textmanuscripts.com/medieval/dominican-processional-114841> [accessed 10 Aug 2019]

⁸⁷ Naughton, *Manuscripts from Poissy*, p. 193.

⁸⁸ Naughton, *Manuscripts from Poissy*, p. 190, cf. also pp. 184, 193. Maintaining books, including a number of processions which seem to have been held centrally and redistributed to nuns as needed, was a duty incumbent upon the cantrix and sub-cantrix.

⁸⁹ Naughton, *Manuscripts from Poissy* p. 329.

⁹⁰ British Library, Egerton MS 2601. This Prosar was copied for nuns of Poissy in the middle of the sixteenth century. See Naughton, *Manuscripts from Poissy*, no. 25, pp. 329-330.

⁹¹ The autograph in the British Library Prosar is in a more formal calligraphic script, but the formation of the letters, in particular the distinctive capital D which opens with a downwards vertical stroke through the middle of the letter, and the q, which finishes with a long horizontal stroke to the right looping from the bottom of the descender, leaves little doubt that they were written by the same person.

⁹² Naughton, *Manuscripts from Poissy*, pp. 329-330.